

SENATE BILL 3154  
By Graves

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-1-201; Section 49-1-302; Section 49-5-101; Section 49-5-108 and Title 49, Chapter 5, Part 56, relative to certification of teachers.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-1-201, is amended by adding the following new subsection to be appropriately designated:

( ) The commissioner shall implement policies on certification authorized by the board under Section 2 of this act.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-1-302, is amended by adding the following new subsection, to be appropriately designated:

( )

(1) The state board of education shall by written policy provide for the certification and employment as teachers of persons who do not hold teaching certificates issued by the state.

(2) The policy shall provide for a person being certified to satisfactorily complete the following:

(A) an examination for admission to a teacher education program to determine if the person's basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics are sufficient to perform satisfactorily as a teacher; and

(B) a one-year internship.

(3) To qualify under this act for an internship for certification to teach primary grades, a person must have a bachelor's degree in liberal arts, English, history, mathematics, life science, earth science, child psychology, or a foreign

language. The degree must be from an institution of higher education that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency.

(4) To qualify under this act for an internship for certification to teach secondary grades, a person must have a bachelor's degree in the subject area for which certification is sought. The degree must be from an institution of higher education that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency.

(5) The state board shall issue certification based on an evaluation of:

(A) the person's academic knowledge;

(B) the results of the examination required by subdivision (2)(A) of this section;

(C) the person's ability to communicate information effectively to pupils; and

(D) the academic achievement of pupils taught by the person during internship.

(6) The board shall report the issuance of a certificate under this act to the commissioner of education.

(7) A person certified under this act is subject to all provisions of this code relating to teachers except a provision that requires a teaching certificate issued by the state.

(8) A local board of education may accept as certification within that district a certificate issued under this act.

(9) After the one-year provisional period, the district must present the individual to the state certification board for full certification.

(10) The state shall certify those presented by the districts for full certification, if the requirements of subsection (2) have been satisfied.

(11) The board shall review every three (3) years the candidate submissions from the districts to evaluate the effectiveness and quality of the individual district programs.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-5-101(e), is amended by adding the following sentence at the end of the subsection:

Provided, however, that the board may issue professional licenses based on work done in other colleges and universities, or based on non-college work or experience, if, in the opinion of the board and in accordance with rules and regulations issued by the board, the alternative work is equivalent to or better than the teacher training curriculum.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-5-108(c)(1), is amended by adding the following before the words "twelfth grade" at the end of the subdivision:

, except as otherwise authorized in Section 2 of this act.

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-5-5603(a), is amended by deleting the period at the end of the subsection and substituting the following:

, except as otherwise authorized in Section 2 of this act.

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 49-5-5606, is amended by adding the following after the citation "49-5-5605":

, or are otherwise qualified as provided in Sections 2 and 3 of this act

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect July 1, 2004, the public welfare requiring it, and shall apply to all persons seeking certification after that date.